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THE OCCASIONAL WRITER.

Number II.

3 Feb. 1727

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THE

Occaſional Writer.

N° II.

To the ſame.

Nunc agilis fio, & merſor civilibus Undis
Virtutis veræ Cuſtos, rigiduſq; Satelles.

Lucan.

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THE

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Nº II.

To the ſame.

Moſt Noble Sir,

I THINK my ſelf obliged in honour to let the World know, that you have treated all my Propoſals to write in your Service with a Contempt unuſual from one in your Station; for

I have ſeen the Times when every little paultry Proſtitute of his Pen found Countenance and Encouragement: theſe Wretches are ſure of both, whenever there are any bad Meaſures to be juſtify'd, or any bold Strokes to be given; and the Croaking of theſe Ravens has always, in my Imagination, boded ſome Miſchief or other to the Commonwealth.

FOR this Reaſon, I took upon me the Character of a moſt infamous Libeller in my firſt Addreſs to you, that I might be able to make a ſurer Judgment of our preſent Condition, and know better what Expectations to entertain; ſo that I own I am moſt agreeably diſappointed in not receiving any Letter or Meſſage from you: I own, that inſtead of biting you, I am fairly bit my ſelf.

SOME malicious Refiners may pretend, perhaps, that an Addreſs of ſuch a nature, made in ſo publick a manner, could meet with no other Treatment, even from

from a Miniſter who was willing to accept the Propoſal. Malice, I ſay, may refine thus, and endeavour to depreciate a virtuous Action which cannot be deny'd, by ſuppoſing ſuch Motives to it as cannot be prov'd. The Practice is too common, and eſpecially where Men are divided into Parties, where publick Diſputes create and nouriſh private Animoſities, and where perpetual Feuds irritate the natural Malignity of the Heart. But far be it from me to judge with ſo little Charity; I am willing to believe, Sir, that you declin'd the Offers made you, not on account of the publick Addreſs by which they were conveyed, but becauſe you diſdain'd to ſupport a virtuous Adminiſtration by a venal Pen.

WHEN I meet a Man with loaded Piſtols in his Pocket, or a Dagger under his Cloak, I ſuſpect that he is going upon no very honorable Deſigns. Houſe-breakers and Coiners have been detected, by having their Tools found about them: Informers, Spies, and Hireling Scribblers

are the Tools of an evil Stateſman, and when I ſee all ſuch diſcourag'd, and none of them about a Miniſter, I think my ſelf oblig'd to ſuppoſe that his Deſigns are honorable, and his Meaſures directed to the Publick Good.

I TAKE this Opportunity therefore of begging your Pardon for the Trial I preſumed to make; the Liberty indeed was great; but ſince it has turn'd ſo vaſtly to your Honour, I hope to be the more eaſily forgiven. Shall I own it, Sir? My Hopes go ſtill farther, you diſdain'd me under the feign'd Character which I aſſumed; from the ſame Principle of Honour, from the ſame Conſciouſneſs of Merit, you will, nay you muſt afford me ſome ſhare of your Eſteem, when I appear, as I intend to do for the future, under my own: Theſe Papers ſhall breathe nothing but Zeal to promote the Honour of his Majeſty, the Security of our preſent happy Eſtabliſhment, and in one word, the Good of our Country: The ſame Spirit which animates you and me, ſhall animate them; and

and I cannot doubt of your Approbation, when I co-operate with you to theſe Purpoſes, which were certainly the ſole Inducements you had to enter into Buſineſs; as it is manifeſt that you continue at the Head of Affairs for no other Reaſons.

THE Truth is, however, (for I think it becoming a Friendſhip which is likely to grow as intimate as ours, that I ſhould diſguiſe nothing from you) two Things have lately happen'd which gave ſome little Shock to my good Opinion of you. The firſt is an Unwillingneſs you manifeſted, that the true State of the National Debts ſhould be known by the Nation, and the ſevere Cenſure you paſs'd on ſuch Perſons as were deſirous to give their Countrymen a fair Account of their Condition in a Part ſo eſſential, that our being a Nation or not a Nation, depends almoſt intirely in this Criſis, on our running or not running farther into Debt. The other is the Publication of a Pamphlet ſuppos'd to be written by your Direction, which is

is evidently deſign'd to keep us no leſs in the dark as to all our Affairs abroad.

AS to the firſt, that Matter has been taken up already; and will I doubt not *in all Places*, and *in all Manners*, be ſo thorowly ſifted, that we ſhall no longer be at a Loſs, either as to the Revenue, and the real Charges upon it, or as to the whole Management of it. In which Examination, Sir, let me adviſe you as a Friend, to act an ingenuous Part, that Suſpicions may not increaſe, and that I may not be obliged to write to you in a Style to which I ſhall turn my Pen with Reluctancy.

AS to the latter, I hope it will be likewiſe examin'd; and if I was able to take ſuch a Task on my ſelf, I ſhould I am perſuaded in doing ſo, but make a ſecond Trial of you to your Glory, and knit the Bands of our Friendſhip the cloſer, by anſwering a Pamphlet of ſo pernicious Conſequence, and writ with ſo ill a Deſign. But I know my own Unfitneſs to inform,

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to inſtruct, and to rouſe our Countrymen, ſome from their Lethargy, and ſome from their Golden Dreams; I may toll the Alarm-Bell, but Perſons of greater Strength and Skill muſt be called upon to raiſe it, and to ring it out in the Ears of the Nation.

WE are grown more eaſy, nay more willing than ever to be impoſed upon; and we do more than half the Work of thoſe who find their Account in deluding us: almoſt every Man conſiders himſelf as a ſingle Perſon; thoſe few who extend their Conſiderations farther, ſeldom or never carry them beyond the narrow Syſtem of a Family, or a Party. And thus it happens, that private Intereſt is become the Criterion by which Judgments are form'd upon publick Affairs. The Man, whoever he be, who is at any time in Faſhion, has nothing to do but to hold out that Purſe, which the more he empties it, the ſurer he is to fill: after which let him declaim imperiouſly, and aſſert boldly, without regarding Proof, or con-

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deſcending to argue; let one of his Tools write a Pamphlet in much the ſame ſtrain, and the Work is done, the Opinion of Mankind is ſettled, the Croud repeats what the Orator has ſaid and the Author writ; the Clamour is echoed back on all ſides, and theſe Echoes, the reverſe of all others, ſtrengthen by Repetition. Thus the Corrupt lead the Blind, and the Blind lead one another; the ſtill Voice of Reaſon is drown'd in popular Clamour, and Truth is over-whelmed by Prejudice.

THIS is a true Account of what happens frequently; it is ſo far from being a Deſcription drawn from Imagination, that I could give ſeveral Inſtances, and perhaps ſhall have occaſion to quote ſome of ſuch groſs Impoſitions on the common Senſe of Mankind, offer'd in this manner, and offer'd with Succeſs, as no one would be bold enough to attempt putting on the weakeſt Man in *Britain* in private Converſation.

THERE

THERE are therefore, God knows, but too many Reaſons for him to deſpond, who entertains a Thought of prevailing on the Generality of People, to lay aſide their Prejudices, to check their Paſſions, and to conſider the State of the Nation in a due Extent, and in a true Light: And yet ſuch is our Condition, ſuch a Criſis are we in, that if we do not take and execute this Reſolution now, it may very probably be out of our Power to do it hereafter to any good Purpoſe.

IN our Senate we hear of great Dangers which we have to apprehend from Abroad, and if we believe what is ſaid in a foreign * S——, we are expoſed to very great ones at Home. I am willing to hope that both one and the other are magnified: but they may grow to be ſuch in reality as they are repreſented to be, if we do not take more than ordinary

* Vid. *Letter from* Stockholm.

Care; *Firſt*, to weigh in a juſt Ballance *each* of the many Evils which threaten the Nation: and *Secondly*, if we do not penetrate into *every one* of the Cauſes, which have combined to bring them upon us. Shou'd we fail in the firſt Point, we may increaſe our Dangers from Abroad, by over-rating thoſe at Home, and by applying our ſelves ſolely to prevent the latter: but I believe no one thinks us diſpoſed to run into this Extreme; we are much more likely to run into the other, and to increaſe our Dangers at Home, by over-rating thoſe which we apprehend from Abroad. Shou'd we fail in the ſecond Point, and neglect to penetrate into all the Cauſes which combine to bring our preſent Diſtreſs upon us, palliative Remedies alone will be applied, in the uſe of which we may very probably expire after a tedious Languor, but from which we cannot expect a radical Cure.

CONVINCED therefore, that if we neglect the preſent moment, if every Man does not think, and write, and ſpeak

and

and act for his Country at this time, according to his beſt Talents, and according to the Opportunities which he has of exerting them, we ſhall ſoon be in every Senſe a ruin'd Nation :

I CONFESS that I am impatient, however low my hopes of Succeſs run, till ſome abler Pen accepts the Invitation which *the Enquirer into the Reaſons of the Conduct of* Great Britain, gives to every Member of this Community, till an Enquiry is made, according to the Right which he is pleaſed to allow, into our preſent State, and into the Meaſures which have led to it : but then this Enquiry muſt be made upon better Principles, and with an honeſter View than he has who made this which lies before me ; the Perſon who accepts his Invitation, ſhou'd be one who wou'd bluſh to follow his Example, for he acts the part of an Apologiſt, where he profeſſes to act that of an impartial Inquirer ; he ſeems very zealous for the *Succeſs* of the Cauſe which he pleads, and very indifferent what *Means* he employs

to procure this *Succeſs* ; many things are diſguiſed, many are concealed, and hardly any are repreſented in their natural and proper Light : Fallacy, Sophiſm, and a puerile Declamation, ſwell the elaborate Treatiſe ; but there was Deſign perhaps as well as Habit in ſuch a manner of writing upon this occaſion, ſince a bad Cauſe muſt be defended by ſuch means, and therefore by ſuch Pens as wou'd diſgrace and weaken a good one ; ſince it may poſſibly appear upon a fair Examination that the Cauſe he is retain'd in is none of the beſt.

IF this ſhou'd appear, I am apt to believe that thoſe who ſet him at Work will not be much concerned ; they cou'd not look on this Pamphlet as any thing better than a momentary Expedient to miſlead and inflame : if it has that Effect, if it ſerves to keep up the Deluſion till all the Jobs which are to be done, are done ; the Ends which they propoſed to themſelves are perhaps anſwered. But if this

Nation

Nation ſhou'd awaken to a ſenſe of their true Intereſt, and if the *Britiſh* Spirit ſhou'd once more revive amongſt us, it might very well happen that theſe Perſons wou'd have made a faulty reckoning; for ſurely after having exerciſed the Juſtice of the Nation by cenſuring in *one* Parliament a Treaty of Peace which has been approved in *another*, it will not be thought ſtrange if we puniſh at one time or another thoſe who have negotiated us out of Peace and Tranquillity, into War and Confuſion, altho the Wiſdom of the Nation ſhou'd think fit to ſupport for the preſent the Meaſures of theſe Miniſters.

THE Enquirer ſuppoſes the whole Face of Affairs in *Europe* to have received the great Alteration, which he is ſo much ſurpriſed at, within the Space of the laſt Year; but I cannot agree with him that the Turn has been ſo ſudden as he repreſents it: *The Calm hardly to be parallel'd by any paſt Proſpect*, as this great

great Maſter of Style expreſſes himſelf by a Figure of *Hibernian* Rhetorick, was accompany'd, as Calms frequently are, by many ſigns of an approaching Storm, which Signs did not eſcape the Obſervation of the Sailors, and even Paſſengers in our Veſſel, tho they eſcaped that of our able Pilots, who were it ſeems all that while in a moſt ſerene Security: The particular Evils which we apprehend at preſent were known to our Miniſters above a Year ago; if it be true, as the Enquirer affirms, that the Treaty of *Hannover*, and Negotiations in Conſequence of it, are *the Steps which the Court of* Great Britain *thought fit to take as ſoon as poſſible, after the Danger we were in appeared evident beyond all Contradiction.* But before the particular Danger appeared, the general Danger was evident enough: when the Treaty of *Vienna* was made, our Ship ſtruck; but we had been ſailing among Rocks and Shoals long before, ever ſince we quitted our Port, and launched out to Sea, on the wiſe Errand

rand of convoying other People ſafe to theirs.

HE therefore who is deſirous to make the Enquiry propoſed, in ſuch a manner as may be of real Uſe to the Publick, muſt take up things much higher than this partial Writer was inſtructed to do. Many things happened during the Congreſs of *Cambray* which deſerve to be explained; and there are Treaties both previous and ſubſequent to the Quadruple Alliance, which deſerve to be commented upon.

NAY, there ſeems to be a neceſſity of going farther back than this Reign, or even than this Century, if we deſign to be thorowly acquainted with the Original of our preſent Diſtreſs. When we have taken a general Survey of the Conduct of *Britain*, with relation to the Affairs of *Europe* for about two hundred Years, we ſhall come much better prepared to diſcover our true point of Intereſt; and by obſerving how we have de-

part-

parted from it, we ſhall learn how to return to it.

THIS part I will venture to undertake; and what I ſhall ſay upon it, may ſerve at leaſt as an Introduction to that Work, which I hope will be performed by ſome abler Hand.

THE Foundations of the Grandeur of *France*, and thoſe of the Grandeur of the Houſe of *Auſtria*, were laid very near at the ſame Period: *Ferdinand* and *Iſabella* began the latter; and in *Charles* the Vth their Grandſon, and almoſt immediate Succeſſor, it was carried up to that exorbitant Height which made *Europe* tremble under his Reign, under that of his Son, and upon ſome occaſions even later. The Progreſs which *France* made was not ſo rapid, but was perhaps as ſure; ſhe ſhared with her Rival the Spoils of the Houſe of *Burgundy*, by the Addreſs and Vigour of *Lewis* XI. who not only extended the Bounds, and ſtrengthned the Frontier

Frontier of that cloſe compact Body, (whoſe very Figure is an addition to the Force of it) but aſſured its inward Tranquillity better, and render'd that Monárchy more formidable than it had been in the time of his Predeceſſors, when the Authority of the Prince was leſs.

THE forming of two ſuch Powers in *Europe*, made it the Intereſt of all other Princes and States, to keep as much as poſſible a Ballance between them: and here began that Principle of *Engliſh* Policy to be eſtabliſh'd, which, however true and wiſe in it ſelf, has hardly ever been truly and wiſely purſued.

WE ſhould take things rather too high, if we went up to the Reign of King *Henry* VII. tho even there ſome Obſervations are to be made which have relation to our preſent Subject.

FREQUENT and important Occaſions of acting on this Principle preſented themſelves in the time of *Henry* VIII. ſome he took, ſome he neglected, and ſome he managed ill; for to ſay the Truth, the whole Conduct of this Prince was a continued Courſe of Extravagance, Violence and Levity; his Vices glared thro' the beſt Actions of his Life, he exerciſed the Tyranny, and practiſed the bloody Precepts of the Church of *Rome*, even while he was delivering us from the papal Yoak: His deliberations for Peace or War ſeemed often to have a mixture of Humour in them, and his own Paſſions, as well as *Wolſey*'s, made him hold the *Ballance of* Europe, if he did hold it, with an uneven Hand.

THE Reformation which began in his time in *Germany*, and which was compleated by *Edward* VI. and by Queen *Elizabeth* in *England*, gave occaſion to a new diviſion of Intereſts; and

and made it of the utmoſt Importance to the welfare of this Nation, not only to preſerve a Ballance between the two great Powers of *Europe*, but to ſupport the Proteſtant Cauſe againſt them both: The firſt of theſe was to be done by throwing as much as the occaſion might require of our Weight, ſometimes into one, and ſometimes into the other of theſe Scales; but the latter cou'd be effected by nothing leſs than a conſtant adherence to that Side which was for a long time the weakeſt, and which I doubt is ſo ſtill.

BOTH theſe principles were purſued by Queen *Elizabeth*, with the greateſt Wiſdom, and with the greateſt Succeſs. To illuſtrate this fully, it wou'd be neceſſary to run thro' the Annals of her glorious Reign: But a few general Obſervations will ſuffice for our preſent purpoſe. When ſhe came to the Crown, the Nation was divided between two powerful Parties exaſperated by religious Zeal; *Ireland* was Papiſt, *Scotland* was

under the immediate influence of *France*, and the Queen of that Kingdom, married to the Dauphin of *France*, diſputed her Title to the Crown of *England*: In ſhort, the ſureſt ſupport ſhe had amidſt all theſe Difficulties, beſides the firmneſs of her Mind, and the penetration of her Underſtanding, was in *Philip* II. whom ſhe diſoblig'd by refuſing to make him her Husband; and who cou'd not fail of being on many Accounts, as he proved to be, her moſt implacable and dangerous Enemy: She kept Meaſures for a while with him, nay, perhaps with the Court of *Rome*, and ſoon ſettled her Government, and eſtabliſhed her Power; her own Kingdom was the firſt and principal Object of her Care, and ſhe judged very wiſely, that in Order to be conſiderable Abroad, ſhe muſt begin by making her ſelf ſo at Home; her Revenue was adminiſtred with the utmoſt Frugality, Induſtry was incourag'd, Manufactures improved, and Commerce extended; ſhe was far from neglecting foreign Alliances, but her Negotiations were conducted with great Art

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and little Expence, and the Engagements ſhe took were always neceſſary, ſeldom chargeable. She ſupported the Proteſtant Cauſe in *France*, with good Offices, with Loans of Money, and upon ſome preſſing Occaſions with Troops; but ſhe never depended on the gratitude of *Henry* IV. and was neither ſurpriz'd nor unprepar'd when he made Returns very unworthy of the Obligations he had to her. The *Dutch* could not have ſuſtain'd their Revolt from *Spain*, nor have form'd their Commonwealth, without her aſſiſtance. She help'd them powerfully, but ſhe exacted cautionary Towns from them, as a Security for her Reimburſment, whenever they ſhould be in a Condition to pay; and in the mean time as a check to keep them under the influence and direction of *England*. By ſuch Methods as theſe, her own Country grew Rich and Flouriſhing, while ſhe not only preſerved a Ballance of Power abroad, but contributed extremely to reduce *Spain*, from being the Terror of *Europe*, to

that

that low State into which it fell under the Succeſſors of *Philip* II.

THE Reign of King *James* I. is not to be read without a mixture of Indignation and Contempt. He came to the Crown with great Advantages; But a bad Head, and a worſe Heart, hindered him from improving any of them. He loſt the opportunity of uniting the two Kingdoms, he ſuffered his Revenue to be ill adminiſtred, his Miniſters were notoriouſly corrupt, and he himſelf very profuſe.

INSTEAD of aſſwaging, he fomented Diſputes by his Pedantry, eſtabliſhed ſuch Principles of Government, and rais'd ſuch a Spirit in the Clergy, as could hardly fail to produce the terrible Effects which followed in the Reign of his Son.

SUCH a management of Domeſtick Affairs would have put it out of his Power,

Power, if it had been his Inclination to act a wiſer part in foreign Affairs; but he had no ſuch Inclination: Twelve Years he ſuffered himſelf to be amus'd with the *Spaniſh* Match; he countenanced at leaſt the Popiſh, and he abſolutely neglected the Proteſtant Intereſt both in *France* and *Germany*. Inſtead of helping the Diſpoſitions which appear'd to take the Imperial Crown out of the Houſe of *Auſtria*, he favour'd the Cauſe of that Family, and abandon'd his own Children to the Reſentment of the Emperor and the Popiſh League. When the thirty Years War began in 1618. the Liberty of *Germany* and the whole Proteſtant Intereſt were in the utmoſt Peril. The ſole Meaſures which he took for the Support of either conſiſted in ſimple Embaſſies, ridiculous Letters, and languid Negotiations. Queen *Elizabeth* defeated the ambitious Deſigns of the *Spaniſh* Branch of the *Auſtrian* Family, King *James* favour'd thoſe of the *German* Branch of the ſame Family.

OVER the ſucceeding Reign and all that follow'd to the Reſtoration of King *Charles* II. let us draw a Veil.

DURING this time the Decay of the *Spaniſh* Monarchy increaſed apace, the Liberties of *Germany* were aſſerted, and the Power of the Emperor bounded by the Treaties of *Weſtphalia*; but another Power, that of *France*, began to riſe very faſt on the Foundations laid long ago. *Richelieu* and *Mazarine* had given that Crown a great Superiority in the Affairs of *Europe*, and the Prince who wore it reſolv'd to maintain and augment this Superiority at the Expence of all his Neighbours.

THE Attack which *Lewis* XIV. made upon the *Low Countries* in 1667. ſhew'd both in the Manner of it, and in the Pretence taken for it, what *Europe* had to expect from this Prince. On this occaſion the Triple Alliance was made, and happy had it been if the ſame Principles

ciple of Policy had continued to prevail. But the King, who ſat on our Throne with better Senſe and more Courage than his Grandfather, was at leaſt as unfit as he, to defend the Liberties of *Europe*, and perhaps more unfit to defend the Proteſtant Intereſt.

KING *Charles* II. join'd his Councils and his Arms to thoſe of *France*; and when he could not openly aſſiſt, he privately abetted the Uſurpations of that Crown. He might, by conforming to the Deſires of his People, who were in his and their true Intereſt, have had the immortal Honour of preſerving a Ballance of Power in *Europe*: but he choſe the eternal Infamy of helping to deſtroy this Ballance; and not content to be the Ally of a Prince whoſe Enemy he ought to have been, he condeſcended to be his Inſtrument, and even his Penſioner. This Conduct, which took ſo much Strength from that Side which was already too weak, and which added ſo much to that which was already too ſtrong, eſtabliſh'd the abſolute

Superiority of *France*, and left *Spain*, *Germany*, *Italy*, and the Seventeen Provinces, nay and *Britain* too in conſequence, at her Mercy.

THIS terrible Face of Things did not mend on the Acceſſion of King *James* II. to the Throne. Whatever his Politicks were, Religion would have got the better of them. Bigotry muſt have cemented a cloſe Union between him and the King of *France*, who was alone able and willing to aſſiſt him in the Work he had undertaken at home. But the Greatneſs of our Danger, as it ſometimes happens, ſav'd us; and in ſaving us, ſav'd all *Europe*. The Revolution in our Government caus'd a total Change in our Conduct. A Prince who had been long at the Head of a weak but reſolute Oppoſition to *France*, mounted our Throne; and the Principles of maintaining a Ballance between the great Powers of *Europe*, and of ſupporting the Proteſtant Intereſt, came once more into Faſhion in this Kingdom, after having been for near

a Century either neglected, or acted againſt.

THE Body of the Nation reſum'd theſe Principles with Warmth, and has ſupported them ever ſince with unparallel'd Spirit and Vigor. But let it be ſaid without Offence, ſince it may be ſaid with Truth, and ſince it is neceſſary that it ſhould be ſaid upon this Occaſion, We have not purſued them with as much Wiſdom as Zeal. If we have erred in our Politicks ſince the Revolution, it is ſure we have erred on the right ſide: but Errors on the right ſide are Errors ſtill, and may in time prove as fatal as Errors on the other; and are in one reſpect at leaſt more dangerous, as they are leſs attended to at firſt, or guarded againſt.

BETWEEN all Extremes, there is a certain middle Point, which Men of Genius perceive, and to which Men of Honour adhere in private and in publick Life.

THUS Avarice and Prodigality are at an immenſe diſtance; but there is a Space marked out by Virtue between them, where Frugality and Generoſity reſide together. Thus again, to abandon thoſe whom it is our Intereſt to ſupport, is an exceſs of Folly; and to ſupport the Intereſts of other People to the Ruin of our own, is an exceſs of Folly likewiſe. But there are Lines deſcribed by Prudence between theſe two Exceſſes, within which our common Intereſts meet and may proceed together.

IT would be an invidious as well as tedious Task to go thro' all the Inſtances which might be produc'd; wherein we have, under pretence of preſerving *a Ballance of Power in Europe*, gratify'd the Paſſions of particular Men, and ſerv'd the Turns of private Intereſt, till we have render'd that Principle, in a reaſonable purſuit of which our Safety and our Glory conſiſt, the occaſion of real Danger

ger to the Intereſt, and of Reproach to the Wiſdom of our Nation. A few of theſe Inſtances will ſuffice to deduce the *Progreſs* of our *miſtaken Policy*, to evince the *Truth* of what has been advanced in *general*, and to fix the Application of the whole to the *preſent Conjuncture*; wherein I apprehend that we are about to pay the Price not only of late *Errors*, but a *long Series* of *Errors*.

THE War which began in 1688. was no doubt a very neceſſary War. It was neceſſary to extinguiſh the Rebellion in *Scotland*; it was neceſſary to reduce *Ireland*; it was neceſſary to aſſert the new Eſtabliſhment of our Government. Theſe were our *immediate Intereſts*; but we had *remote Intereſts* likewiſe concern'd, which were of themſelves ſufficient to engage us to enter, at leaſt as Allies and Friends, into the War. The *Empire* was in danger by the taking of *Philipsburgh*, and other Enterprizes of the *French*; and *Holland* lay once more

open

open to their Invaſions by the ſeizing of *Bonne*. In the Courſe of this War, *Ireland* was reduced; all the Efforts againſt the Government in *England* and *Scotland* were defeated; and by the Peace, *France* acknowledged King *William*.

AS unfortunate as we had been on the *Rhine* and in *Flanders*, every thing which the *French* had taken in the Courſe of the War from our Allies, was reſtor'd at *Ryſwick*; and *Luxembourg*, which *France* had uſurp'd before the War, was likewiſe given up. Thus far all was well. The Points which *England* contended for were carried, and our Allies recover'd by Treaty more than they had loſt by War.

IF a common Guaranty of this Treaty had been entred into as ſoon as thoſe Powers acceded, who refus'd to ſign when *England* aud *Holland* did; the Tranquillity of *Europe* would have been better ſecured, than it was at this time,

time, or at the Peace of *Nimeghen*; at leaſt *England* would have engaged, as far as it became her to do, even upon the Principle of maintaining the Ballance of Power, and no further.

BUT inſtead of taking this ſtep, we took another, which prov'd fatal in its Conſequences. The Death of *Charles* II. King of *Spain*, without Children, was then in Proſpect: The Pretenſions of *France* were known, and its Power had been lately felt. Whenever the caſe ſhould happen, a War ſeem'd to be unavoidable. But this War muſt have been made by *France* alone, for the Conqueſt of the *Spaniſh* Monarchy; which, as powerful as we then thought her, and as inſolent as ſhe really was, ſhe would not have engaged in lightly. Neither could ſhe have ſupported it, if ſhe had, ſince even with *Spain* on her ſide ſhe could not have ſupported the laſt; if the Mines of *Peru* had not been *unaccountably* left open to her.

ON the Apprehenſion however of ſuch a War, and on the ſpecious Pretence of preſerving a Ballance of Power in *Europe*, the *Partition Treaties* were made: that is, without the Knowledge of the King of *Spain*, we diſpos'd of his Inheritance; without the Conſent of the Emperor, and in concert with his adverſe Party, we ſettled the Rights conteſted between the Houſe of *Auſtria* and *Bourbon*: and we engaged to make this *Partition* good by *Arms*.

I DO not enter into the Reaſons for and againſt this Treaty, which may be drawn from the particular Stipulations contained in it, but content my ſelf to obſerve in general what impolitick Meaſures we were at this Period betray'd into by an over-weening deſire to preſerve the Ballance of Power; and how much reaſon we have to be always on our guard againſt Errors of this kind, ſince a *Prince*, whom *Genius* and *Experience* had render'd the greateſt Man of his Age, was not exempt from them, but drew

drew both *England* and *Holland* fatally into them.

WHENEVER this Ballance is in real Danger by the exorbitant growth of one Power, or by the Union of more, other Princes and States will be alarm'd of courſe. All of them ought, and moſt of them will take Meaſures for their common Security. But the *wiſe Councils* amongſt them will upon every ſuch occaſion proportion their Meaſures, and the Engagements they enter into, not according to the Nature of the Danger *conſider'd generally*, but according to the *immediate* or *remote* Relation which it has to *each* of them, and according to the *Strength*, *Situation*, or any other Circumſtance which may be peculiar to each of them.

TO do otherwiſe, would be to loſe ſight of our own particular Intereſt in the purſuit of a common Intereſt. It would be nothing better than ſetting up

for the *Don Quixotes* of the World, and engaging to fight the Battles of all *Mankind*. The State which keeps its *own particular Intereſt* conſtantly in view, has an invariable Rule to go by; and this Rule will direct and limit all its Proceedings in foreign Affairs: ſo that ſuch a State will frequently take *no* Share, and frequently a *ſmall* Share in the Diſputes of its Neighbours, and will never exert its *whole* Strength but when its *Whole* is at ſtake. But a State who neglects to do this has no Rule at all to go by, and muſt fight to negotiate, and negotiate to fight again, as long as it is a State; becauſe as long as it is a State there will be Diſputes among its Neighbours, and ſome of theſe will prevail at one time, and ſome at another, in the perpetual Flux and Reflux of human Affairs.

IF the Kings of *France* and *Spain*, and the *Emperor*, had made an Agreement amongſt themſelves about the Succeſſion to the Dominions of *Spain*, conſiſtent with the common Intereſt of *Europe*, and

and conſidering the Partiality which the Court of *Spain* had at that time for the Houſe of *Auſtria*, there was little room to fear that ſuch an Agreement would have been too favourable to the Houſe of *Bourbon*. If any ſuch Partition had been made, I ſay, no Objection would have remain'd, either as to the Right or Manner of making it, and we might have eſcaped a War. If theſe Princes had done nothing of this kind, we might have been engag'd upon the King of *Spain*'s Death, as I ſaid before, in a *defenſive* War, for preſerving the Dominions of our old Allies, and the Liberties of *Europe*, againſt the Uſurpations of our antient Enemy. But inſtead of waiting to be *Auxiliaries* in a Defenſive War, we put our ſelves under a Neceſſity of being *Principals* in an Offenſive one; and by affecting to ſecure the Ballance of Power, when we had neither Call nor Right to meddle, we reduc'd our Affairs to this *abſurd Alternative*, that we muſt either make an Offenſive War as Principals a-

gainſt the Emperor and *Spain*, in order to conquer for *France*, which was equally impolitick and unjuſt, or againſt *France* and *Spain*, in order to conquer for the Emperor under the greateſt Diſadvantages poſſible; which happen'd to be the Caſe.

THE Partition Treaties forced the King of *Spain* to make a Will in favour of the Houſe of *Bourbon*; and the *Spaniards* threw themſelves into the Arms of *France*, to prevent the Diſmemberment of their Monarchy.

THUS was the Ballance of Power loſt by our meddling where we had nothing to do, even before it could have been in danger, if we had not meddled at all. We loſt it, and the Emperor knew that we muſt reſtore it for our own ſakes, which could be done no otherwiſe than by conquering for him; and this he left us to do the beſt we could. While we fought his

his Battles, he lent us the *Auſtrian* Title, the Perſon of his Son, the preſent Emperor, and little elſe. We neglected every thing, and ſacrific'd every thing in the Proſecution of this Quarrel: but the Imperial Councils were ſo far from neglecting any thing, or ſacrificing any thing to it, that they ſeem'd wholly taken up for ſome Years in ſettling the Affairs of *Hungary* to their Satisfaction; and they ſacrific'd to an idle Refinement in Politicks, the greateſt Opportunity which we ever had, or muſt ever hope to have; I mean that of *deſtroying the Naval Force of France*, by the taking of *Toulon*. This they deliberately and almoſt avowedly hindered.

IF ever People were call'd upon to think of their *own immediate* Intereſts, we were ſo at this time. Whether we could *then* have put an end to the expenſive War we were engaged in for the Houſe of *Auſtria*, in a manner con-

conſiſtent with the publick Intereſt of *Europe*, I am not able to determine. Certain it is in Fact, that far from entertaining any ſuch Thoughts, we redoubled our Spirit, and our Efforts in the proſecution of the War. As we acquired new Allies, we enlarged our Engagements; and as we obtain'd new Victories, we extended our Views. The Grand Alliance form'd by King *William* for reſtoring a Ballance of Power in *Europe*, propos'd no other Objects than *ſufficient Barriers*, *Security* to *Trade*, and *reaſonable Satisfaction* to the Houſe of *Auſtria* *. Theſe were thought by that great Prince, all the Points neceſſary to be contended for. But inſtead of confining our ſelves to ſo narrow a Plan, we judg'd that the Ballance of Power could not be effectually reſtor'd, unleſs we wreſted the whole *Spaniſh* Monarchy from the

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* Vide G. Al. Art. 8.

Houſe

Houſe of *Bourbon*, to give it to the Houſe of *Auſtria*. For this Prize we fought, and fought with as little regard to all other Intereſts, as if we had defended our own Altars, and our own Houſes.

MUST we not acknowledge upon this Occaſion, Sir, the ſhortneſs of human Foreſight? The very Meaſure which we purſu'd at ſo great Expence of Blood and Treaſure, (becauſe nothing leſs could ſecure the Ballance of Power in *Europe*, and even the Trade of this Kingdom, and the Proteſtant Succeſſion, againſt the Invaſions of *France* and the Pretender) that very Meaſure would, it ſeems, have put all theſe into the utmoſt Peril.

IF we had ſucceeded in our attempts to ſet the Crown of *Spain* on the Head of the preſent Emperor, and his Brother the Emperor *Joſeph* had liv'd; would our Danger from the Union of theſe two Brothers not have been at leaſt as great,

as

as that which is apprehended from the Union of the preſent Emperor, and of the preſent King of *Spain*, Rivals almoſt from their Cradles, and by a long Courſe of Oppoſition ſuch inveterate Enemies, that they *could hardly be kept*, as the Enquirer aſſures us, *within the bounds of common Decency towards one another, by all the Addreſs of two powerful Mediators in a publick Treaty?* Might not the ſame *Addreſs*, as *threw* theſe Enemies *into one another's Arms*, for it will appear they did not *run* thither ſo unaccountably, and united them in *Deſigns deſtructive to the Commerce and Rights of other Nations*, have ſuccceeded equally well between the two Brothers, eſpecially ſince in this Caſe there would have been but *half* the Work to do? The Union would have been form'd to our Hands, and our *Addreſs* could only have been ſhewn in giving ſuch proper Provocations as might have inſpired the Deſigns.

WOULD *Charles* have been leſs favourable to the Trade of his Brother's Subjects at any place in the *Auſtrian* Dominions, than *Philip* ſhews himſelf to the Trade of the Subjects of *Charles*? Would *Joſeph* not have concurr'd to aſſiſt his Brother to regain *Gibraltar* and the Iſland of *Minorca*; at leaſt as zealouſly as we can ſuppoſe that *Charles* concurs to aſſiſt *Philip*, either by good Offices, or if you pleaſe to have it ſo, by Force of Arms? Would not a League between the two Brothers have been as much a Popiſh League, as that which we are ſo much alarm'd at, between the ſurviving Brother and the preſent King of *Spain*? Would not the firſt have made uſe of the Pretender, as the latter is ſaid to do, and as every Prince or State, with whom we happen to be at variance, may be provoked to do? In ſhort, I may ſafely challenge the Author of the Enquiry, as great a Caſuiſt as he is, to ſhew any difference between the two Caſes which I have

compar'd together, except this, That we might have been expos'd to greater Dangers from that Settlement of *Europe* which we fought to bring about, than we are, or can probably be expos'd to, from that which we were ſo ſollicitous to prevent. But the Caſe is ſtill ſtronger than I have put it: for even after the Death of the Emperor *Joſeph*, his preſent Imperial Majeſty continu'd his Claim to the whole *Spaniſh* Monarchy; and *you*, and *I*, and *many* of us, continued to ſupport his Claim, and oppos'd with all our Force the Negotiations of Peace which were begun upon a different Principle. Happily we fail'd of Succeſs. The many who remonſtrated *that we were haſtening apace to make him a Power too great and too formidable; and that we ſhould find in him at laſt the Enemy we then dreaded only in another*; prevail'd. Had they not, in what a Condition ſhould we have been at this time? Would the Emperor have been more grateful or leſs powerful with

with the Crown of *Spain* and the *Indies*, added to ſo many others? If the Union between him and the King of *Spain* is ſo formidable to us, how much more Reaſon ſhould we have had to apprehend the Conſequences to our *Trade, and in the End to our* Liberties, and our Religion, themſelves; if theſe divided Powers had been united in the ſame *ungrateful* Perſon, as it is the Mode at preſent to call the Emperor?

IF Don *Carlos* ſhould marry the eldeſt Arch-Dutcheſs, if the Emperor ſhould die without Iſſue *Male*, if the King of *France* ſhould die without Iſſue *Male*, if the Prince of *Aſturias* ſhould die without Iſſue *Male*, and if the Princes of the Blood in *France* and *Spain* ſhould not ſupport the Validity of the Renunciations, all which is within the bounds of poſſibility; "*Don* Carlos *may be* "*at once Emperor, King of* France, "*and King of* Spain; *and have the* "*vaſt Strength and Riches of all theſe*

"*Powers united and center'd in him.*" This terrible Object ſtares our ſpeculative Enquirer in the Face, and diſturbs his Head. It diſturbs very probably thoſe excellent Heads who ſet him a ſcribling, who can ſee ſo far into Futurity at preſent, and who not very long ago were unable to diſcern the neareſt and moſt probable Events. Let us conſider now, what Conſequence of this kind might have happen'd, if, for ſecuring a Ballance of Power in *Europe*, the preſent Emperor had been likewiſe King of *Spain*. If then the King of *France*, inſtead of marrying the Daughter of *Staniſlaus*, had marry'd the eldeſt Daughter of the Emperor, which ſurely had been within the Bounds of Poſſibility; there would remain but one Chance at this time, *viz.* The Emperor having a Son, to ſave us from the Combination of ſuch a Power as would in reality form what we commonly, tho improperly, call *Univerſal Monarchy*; ſince there would be nothing elſe which could hinder

hinder *Lewis* XV. from being King of *France*, of *Spain*, and of the *Weſt-Indies*, Maſter of all the *Auſtrian* Dominions, and by Conſequence Emperor. The Truth I would inculcate by what I have ſaid is this, That as the Partition Treaty threw too much Weight into the Scale of *Bourbon*, to the Deſtruction of the Ballance of Power in *Europe*: ſo the neceſſary Conſequence of the War we made to reſtore this Ballance, muſt have been, if we had ſucceeded according to our Deſires, to deſtroy it again, by throwing too much Weight into the Scale of *Auſtria*. This has been prov'd by the Event, and the Enquirer demonſtrates it, or he demonſtrates nothing.

As far therefore as we have brought this Deduction, that is to the end of the laſt War; it is manifeſt that the Notion of preſerving a Ballance of Power in *Europe*, has for the Reaſons touch'd upon above, and which every Man will

will extend in his own Thoughts, prov'd to us like an *Ignis fattuus*; in the Purſuit of which we have been led from Difficulty to Difficulty, and from Danger to Danger.

IF we enquire whether the Treaties of *Utrecht* and *Baden* did afford us an Opportunity of correcting our Errors, and of profiting by our Experience, it will be found that they did; ſince all the Points which had been in conteſt were then ſettled, and this Settlement acquieſced in by all the Parties to the War, except the Emperor who kept up ſtill his Claim againſt *Philip* V.

BUT the keeping up this Claim could not have endanger'd the publick Tranquillity: he was unable to attack *Spain* for want of a Maritime Force, or even *Sicily*, which was cover'd beſides by the Guaranty of the Neutrality of *Italy*; and this Neutrality ſerv'd likewiſe to hinder *Spain* from attacking him: there might have been a War of the

the Pen, and there could have been no other between them.

At the worſt, if the King of *Spain* had invaded any Part of *Italy*, the Guarantees of the Neutrality might eaſily have prevented ſuch an Attempt; and in ſo doing, they would have obſerv'd the Treaties, and kept the Peace, far from breaking either one or the other,

IN ſuch a State of Foreign Affairs we had certainly an Opportunity of looking carefully after our own. The King of *Spain* had no Pretence to ask for any Alteration in the Settlement ſo lately eſtabliſh'd with his own Conſent; and the Emperor could not have complain'd of his Majeſty for obſerving Treaties which he would not have made, but which he found made; nor for refuſing to enter into a new War on his account.

WHE-

WHETHER we improv'd this Opportunity or not, what our preſent Condition is, and by what Steps we have been reduced to it, I leave to the Enquiry of ſome Perſon more capable than my ſelf. Let it ſuffice, that I have endeavour'd to remove ſome Deluſions which have affected even Men of the beſt Underſtandings, and the beſt Intentions; and to prepare the Minds of my Countrymen to conſider at this critical Point of time what our National Intereſt really is, without being byaſs'd in their Judgments by what they may have thought of it on any former Occaſions.

I am,

Moſt noble SIR,

Your Honour's moſt

Devoted Servant,

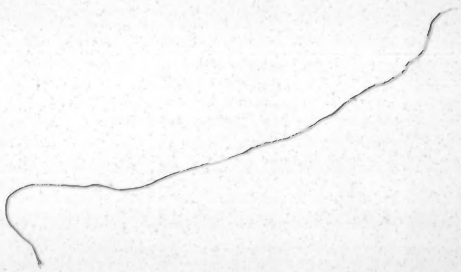
Febr. 3. 1726-7.

The Occaſional Writer.

POSTSCRIPT.

JUST after I had ſent theſe Sheets to the Preſs, a Paper entitled, *A Letter to the Occaſional Writer*, was brought to me. I have read this ſtiff pedantick Piece with more Attention than it deſerves, tho I read it curſorily; and notwithſtanding the Pains which the Author takes to paſs for you, I am ready to acquit you of the Scandal. You would certainly have writ better, and your Pen at leaſt would not have appear'd ſo near a-kin to that of the *Craftsman* Extraordinary.

WHO this Author ſuppoſes the *Occaſional Writer* to be, I cannot gueſs. Such a Wretch as he deſcribes is, I believe, to be found no where, nor even ſuch an Image of Guilt and Mi-

ſery any where, except in the *Horrors of his own Mind.* I ſhall therefore with a *decent Contempt* for this ſcurrilous Scribler, and without any Concern about his *imaginary* Correſpondent, continue theſe inoffenſive Letters, in great Tranquillity and Sedateneſs, as often as Occaſion invites me, or as I find my ſelf in the Humour.

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